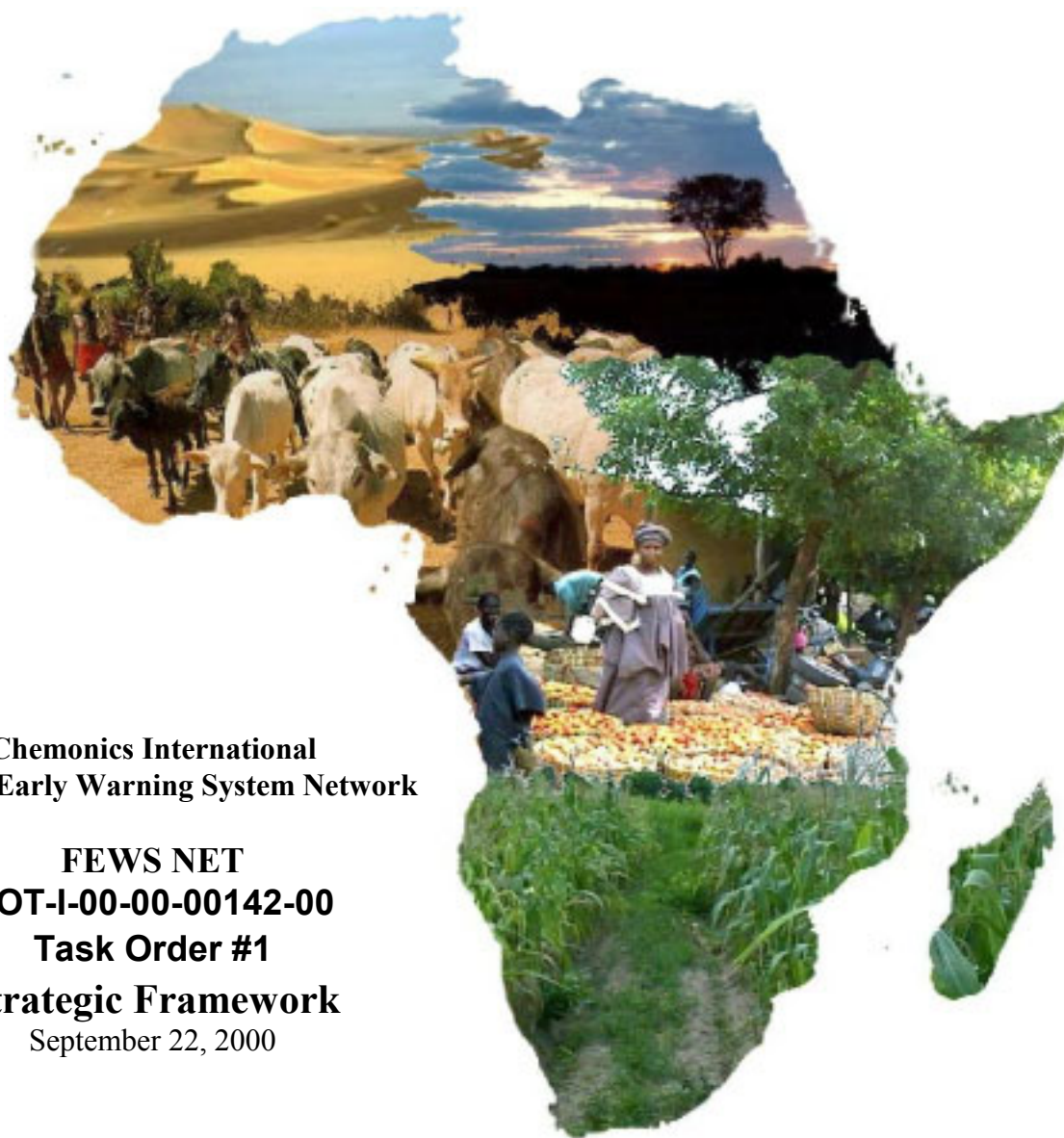




Famine Early Warning System Network



**Chemonics International
Famine Early Warning System Network**

**FEWS NET
AOT-I-00-00-00142-00
Task Order #1
Strategic Framework
September 22, 2000**

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ACRONYMS

AFR/SD	Africa Bureau Office of Sustainable Development (USAID)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations)
FEWS	Famine Early Warning System
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning System Network
FDI	foreign direct investment
F.E.G.	Food Economy Group
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FAO)
FNR	FEWS NET Representative
IGO	inter-governmental organizations
NAP	National Action Program
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRSPS	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (The World Bank)
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
VAM	Vulnerability, Analysis, and Mapping
WARP	West Africa Regional Program
WFP	World Food Programme

SECTION I

Introduction

Food security is being increasingly understood as an inseparable linchpin to many other development issues. When food insecurity prevails, other development actions designed to improve human livelihoods are negated. Food security is a fundamental prerequisite for any other development progress to be imagined. Across the spectrum of Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) countries, poor farm productivity and constant natural hazards remain pivotal in creating and maintaining poverty.

Where food insecurity is chronic, growing evidence shows that other important investments in poverty reduction — such as basic and girls education, and family planning — can be negated, as labor demands associated with coping strategies lessen interest in both smaller family size and the value of education. Food insecurity ripples throughout the economy. Countries that are chronically food insecure have significantly lower savings and investment ratios and tend to have the lowest global levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). They are also the countries most likely to have falling trends in their development assistance levels, and consequently are increasingly dependent on incurring new debt to finance basic public services. Without a performing agriculture sector, there is very little in terms of a revenue base to assure comprehensiveness and sustainability in social sector spending for health care, primary education, etc.

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) has concluded in its forthcoming DAC Poverty Reduction Guidelines that agriculture is a key to “pro-poor growth” in most very poor countries because the multipliers to output and employment from increased agricultural incomes are very strong. Gains in rural productivity will be a most important factor for catalyzing meaningful poverty reduction in poor countries.





A. FEWS NET and the Challenge of Higher Outcomes

With wide variation in country situations, the challenge is how can FEWS NET begin to employ its expertise, data, and multiple use information to help address a broader set of development constraints that are influenced by food insecurity?

This strategic implementation plan for FEWS NET has been developed as a flexible and iterative means to develop country and regional work plans that are more demand driven than in the past and, as a result, respond to a more challenging set of objectives.

The strategic framework that follows is a means to a more needs based, demand driven, differentiation in both country and regional FEWS NET work. It is based on the premise that in carrying out its normal early warning and vulnerability work, FEWS NET can make policy planning and broader development contributions that go beyond crisis response and preparedness planning.

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The overall purpose of the framework is to provide FEWS NET field representatives (and by extension USAID missions) with a “menu” of actions that can better respond to country specific needs and opportunities for capacity development, network building, and other longer term or specific threats to food security. It will serve as the general frame of reference for the development of annual country and regional work plans.

To contribute to a higher set of development outcomes, FEWS NET plans to begin by ensuring that the fundamental strengths of FEWS are sustained and built upon. These fundamentals are quality and timely early warning, identification of groups vulnerable to prevalent hazards, and the presentation of mitigating responses to prevent famine. These will continue as core priorities; additionally, we will provide added policy value through food economy analyses and special studies as resources allow and local demand dictate.

B. Involving Field Representatives in Strategic Framework Planning

During the third week of August 2000, Chemonics held a weeklong strategy-planning workshop with all of the FEWS NET field representatives. The primary purpose was to develop a non-restrictive overall framework that was field driven, a strategic approach that drew from the experience of FEWS NET representatives, their knowledge of local information demands, and the opportunities and constraints that they will face in carrying out the more ambitious capacity development and policy contribution goals of FEWS NET. Legitimate concerns were articulated about the limited resources available to reach a more ambitious set of objectives and the absence of explicit food security objectives in many USAID missions. There was a strongly expressed desire to have a framework that was coherent in concept but allowed for variability in country and regional work plans to reflect local realities and changing information demands and priorities.

In keeping with the participatory intention of the workshop, the strategic framework that follows is drawn from the valuable contributions of the workshop participants and so represents a consensus framework within which the FNRs believed they could develop flexible country and region specific work plans.

We began the planning workshop by presenting a Chemonics “Vision” for the project, our corporate statement of the overall FEWS NET mission. Following discussion, suggestions, and revision, there was a consensus that the mission statement represented a starting point for the strategic framework.

C. The Chemonics Implementation Vision of FEWS NET

Mission/Vision

To strengthen the abilities of African countries and regional organizations to manage the threats of food insecurity, through the provision of timely and analytical early warning and vulnerability information.

Goals

- Build on the past strengths of FEWS with new analytical tools and information
- Develop a content-rich FEWS NET web site, with supplemental information dissemination to local decision makers
- Reach decision makers with more policy useful information for related development issues
- Strengthen capacity at all levels
- Build networks, including the private sector and NGOs, to emphasize food security concerns and consensus conclusions
- Disseminate food access and livelihoods information more extensively through local networks and media
- Enlarge the financial resources available to the project

Values/Principles

- Demand driven, objective information
- African-led processes, while building networks
- Listening well to clients and stakeholders
- Respect for the livelihoods and coping capabilities of Africans
- Commitment to partnership and the building of consensus
- Provision of reliable information with integrity
- Reaching for higher-level policy contributions, e.g. poverty reduction, environment, and health strategies

Activities/Instruments

- State-of-the-art early warning and remote sensing information
- Monthly reports/web site/e-mail summaries with analytical content
- Assistance for preparedness and response planning
- Food Economy analytical tools, workshops, and training
- Surveying and building of networks at all levels with dialogue and consensus
- Special studies, e.g. urban food insecurity, HIV/AIDS, and food security
- Work plans and annual performance reviews

SECTION II

The Strategic Framework for FEWS NET

FEWS NET falls under Strategic Objective 10 of the USAID Africa Bureau Office of Sustainable Development (AFR/SD) with the objective of:

- “Improved policies, strategies and programs for preventing, mitigating and transitioning out of crisis”

The USAID intermediate result upon which FEWS NET is to be focused is also clear:

- “Improved famine prevention, drought preparedness and adoption of response plans”





During the strategic planning workshop, the means available to FEWS NET to contribute to the overall objective and intermediate result were studied within the opportunities and constraints faced in each country and region. While there were concerns about how rapidly FEWS NET could impact policy and institutional capacity in the short run, there was a confirmation by the FEWS NET field representatives of the five intermediate results that are contained in Task Order One. The discussion focused on how these would be pursued in country specific and regional work plans as outcomes designed to contribute to overall USAID strategic objectives. The five outcomes were restated by the workshop as:

- Strengthened African institutional capacity for early warning and response planning
- Increased usefulness of information to decision makers
- Improved response planning based on all relevant background food security information
- Improved response planning based on early warning and the identification of vulnerable groups
- Improved local monitoring analysis and reporting

Expected Outcomes and Indicators

A more in depth review of the expected outcomes was undertaken during the workshop, with an emphasis on team building within each sub-region. This approach allowed each sub regional team to consider how they might develop actions to produce the outcomes, given differing threats and realities, and also build more synergies between FEWS NET country and regional work plans. To respond to new information needs and opportunities, the group agreed that the adoption of consensus response plans, while important, is too limited an outcome. Adopted plans are often not used when crises arrive. Rather, it is progress in agricultural policy and poverty reduction that will create the conditions for improved food security more than a completed response plan.

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There was general agreement that the FEWS NET outcomes should be more comprehensive in scope. This is consistent with the objective of greater use of information by decision makers, which will only happen if FEWS NET information successfully demonstrates its utility for the improvement of overall policies and food security strategies. The FEWS NET team finally agreed that there should be three core outcomes and three others that were cross cutting and were intended to support (see Figure 1).

The core outcomes were identified as:

1. Dissemination of accurate and timely early warning information
2. Improved vulnerability analysis
3. Improved decision making and response planning

The *cross-cutting outcomes* were identified as:

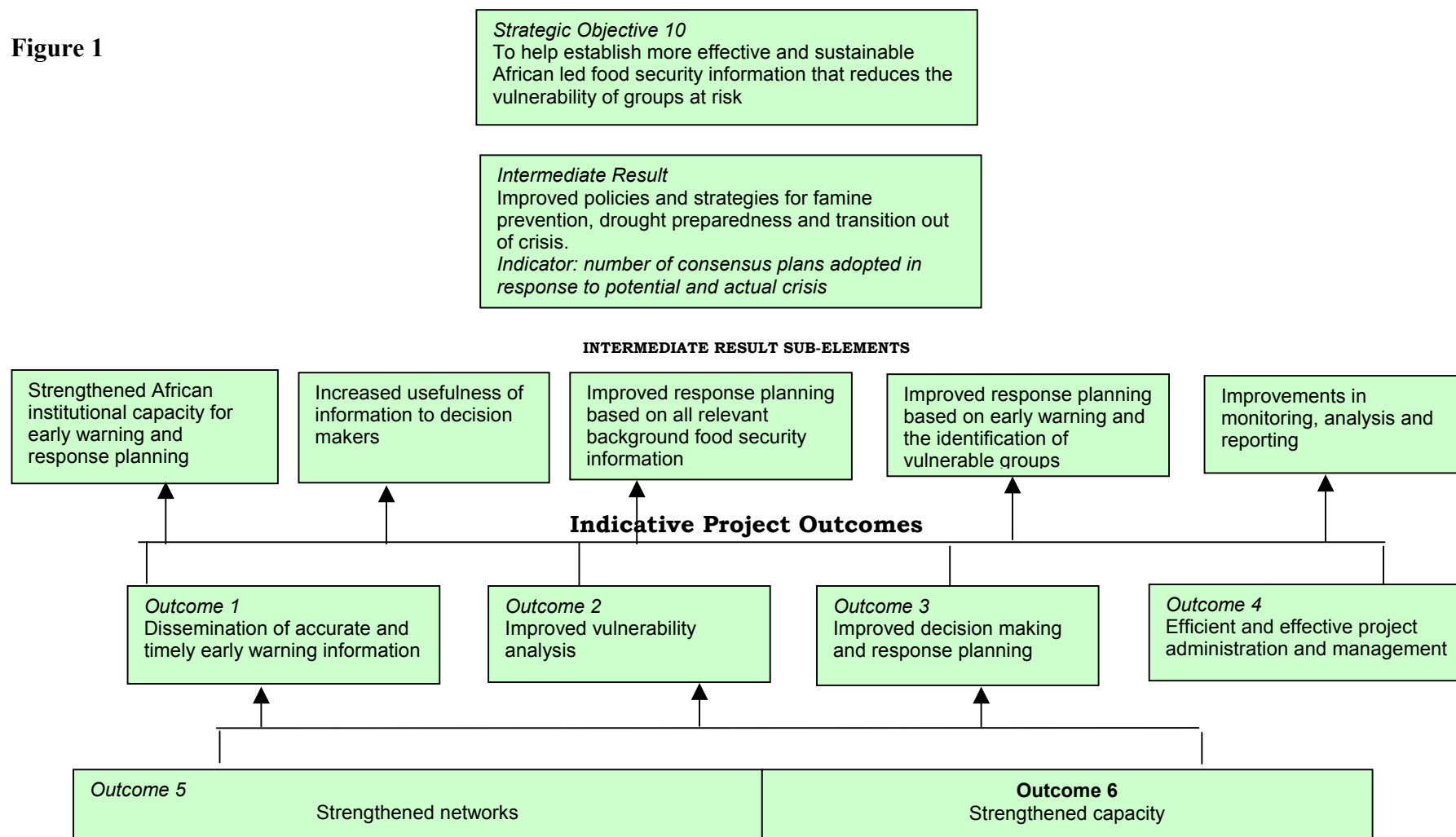
4. Strengthened country and regional networks
5. Strengthened African capacities
6. Efficient and effective project administration and management

The latter group of outcomes was seen as both ends in themselves, but perhaps more importantly, as the principal means for achieving the core outcomes. The challenge now is to incorporate these elements into consensus country work plans that better link FEWS NET information to the key users. At the same time, country and regional work plans will aim to strengthen the linkages between information and response, so that earlier warning, with more analytical information, leads to more timely and appropriate preparedness and policy responses.

It was agreed also that work plans will be developed first by assessing country by country needs through network surveys and dialogue with USAID country missions to see where and how FEWS NET vulnerability information can be used in specific targeting, planning, or other applied use. (Section IX)

As part of work plan preparation, FEWS NET country and regional representatives will survey network capabilities to determine the strengths and weaknesses in food security organizations, analysis, and response capability. This survey information will help frame the country or region specific work plan and assist with proposals to USAID and other partners on supplemental information products. We will then identify what FEWS NET can deliver within existing resources and where new resources will be required.

FEWS NET will use information excellence as the catalyst to encourage partners and networks to coordinate better, share information, consider consequences of actions, and better inform African-led policies. It cannot accomplish these tasks in isolation, but only through catalytic actions that build networks and consensus actions, so that the more substantial resources

Figure 1

available to USAID missions and other donors are programmed in ways that help ensure sustainable local capacity for the longer term. Better coordination among food security agencies and donors is also essential so that mixed messages are not sent to African decision makers and scarce resources are programmed in more effective ways.

From a global perspective, it is clear that FEWS NET is intended to play a role in contributing to the “U.S. Action Plan on Food Security 1999”, which committed the United States to work closely with the FAO, WFP, and other partners to implement the famine and early warning actions adopted by the World Food Summit in 1996.

It has been agreed that FEWS NET, and in particular the food economy vulnerability work with the Food Economy Group (FEG), can contribute to FAO/FIVIMS and WFP/VAM, by developing more consensus in vulnerability methods and working complementarities in countries. FEWS NET Field representatives have been requested to look at these opportunities for making these FIVIMS contributions in their country and regional work plans. The September 24-28 SADC Vulnerability Analysis workshop in Zimbabwe will be a good opportunity to see with FAO and WFP how these relationships and FEWS NET contributions to the US Action plan on Food Security and FIVIMS can be strengthened. It was proposed in the workshop that the emphasis be on country and region level cooperation with FIVIMS and VAM, with Chemonics participation in the FIVIMS Inter Agency Working Group (IAWG), which could be useful if USAID agrees.

SECTION III

Strengthening Early Warning: An Essential Foundation for Policy Response

There was a strong insistence during the strategic planning workshop that the broader policy objectives of FEWS NET, and the greater use of food economy vulnerability analysis, had to begin by building on the early warning strengths of FEWS III while improving the linkages between early warning and policy planning. To accomplish this, we must have a better “baseline” on the effectiveness of information use and on the abilities of current networks to provide relevant and fully analytical information and identify gaps in early warning coverage. These assessments will take time; however, they will begin immediately as part of the processes of country work plan preparedness. It will be possible later to expand the survey to examine the full early warning readiness of networks by examining institutional relationships, their place in policy processes, and the roles of local NGOs, communities, and the private sector. Important FEWS III analyses on the degradation of national early warning and response systems will be factored into the assessment of network strengthening needs.

Another important part of strengthening African-owned early warning systems is to listen better to local demand through the eyes and ears of the networks. We intend to seek more consensus building through greater use of food economy analysis, so that networks can better understand rural livelihoods and the coping mechanisms of poor households. Then response planning can be much more than simply requesting sequencing and targeting food aid.

The degradation of national early warning capacities is of continuing concern. However, in some cases networks and regional institutions are filling some gaps. This will be reflected in country and regional FEWS NET work plans. It should be expected that in coming years many African governments will turn to increasingly competent regional institutions (CILSS/AGHRYMET, SADC/FNRS) for early warning information. In both the Sahel and Southern Africa, project structures have been established to equip these specialized regional institutions to reach national and local decision makers with better early warning information and response proposals.

The known degradation of some national early warning systems has to be addressed. However, an appropriate balance is required between the potentially lower costs and economies of scale of effective regional institutions and the costs to poor countries of sustaining national systems now far too reliant on external donor financing for any semblance of continuity, much less sustainability.

SECTION IV

Vulnerability Analysis and Food Economy Study

A. The Added Value of Food Economy Analysis

As part of its continued commitment to the provision of high quality food security information, FEWS NET plans to incorporate a growing understanding of rural household livelihoods into its analysis of current and future threats and in its regular reporting and capacity strengthening functions.

While FEWS has always been concerned with understanding the magnitude and nature of different food security ‘shocks’, its analysis has (with a few exceptions) been limited to describing the shock (such as a decline in crop production), rather than the shock’s effect on different rural households (such as loss of ‘x%’ of food or cash income).

Building on its already proven expertise in the field of early warning (‘shock’) information, FEWS NET will develop over the next seventeen months its capacity to use food economy analysis in reporting on short-, medium-, and longer-term threats to food security in Africa. The food economy framework is a well-developed, field-proven approach for investigating rural economies and their links to the wider macro-context. Not only will this understanding help practitioners better predict the likely effects of different shocks (such as market closures, production failures, or even conflict-related events) on rural households, but it will also help decision makers understand the likely food security consequences of various resource allocation or policy decisions.

More specifically, food economy information can add significant policy value to FEWS NET’s analytical capacity and reporting in the following ways:





In early warning

Food economy analysis comprises a basic picture of different households’ food and income options and expenditure patterns. This picture provides a critical context for judging the potential impact of economic, political, and even social changes. Early warning information, such as predictions of harvest failures based on associated declines in rainfall, or impending price changes due to a change in government policy, is one side of the ‘risk of food shortage’ equation; food economy information is the other ‘missing’ half.

In development planning

Getting a grasp on the economic context of poor households in rural and urban settings is a crucial first step in developing appropriate plans for supporting these households. So often, development planning ends up being ‘supply’ driven, limited in scope by the implementing agency’s own objectives or skills, or by the outside resources they have to offer. Food economy analysis promotes a tighter link between the actual conditions of rural and urban households and the decisions made about their welfare and future strategies to enlarge livelihood opportunities.

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In the analysis of longer term trends

Because food economy analysis is fundamentally about how rural households make use of local resources, it is also, at its core, about how rural households will cope as the quantity and quality of these resources diminish (or expand) over time. But more than simply providing an account of how households cope in a changing world, the analysis can also provide evidence linking income and food-generating practices to the trends that people are worried about, such as land degradation, and increasing use of protected resources. By showing how constraints within the local economy can lead to negative long-term trends, the hope is that these constraints can be reduced, and new opportunities found for meeting livelihood needs.

B. How FEWS NET Intends to Assist Decision Makers with Food Economy Analysis

The direct link between food economy analysis and more appropriate decision making has already been established in a number of countries and settings. The task at hand, therefore, is to more routinely incorporate this analysis into FEWS NET's information tools, to increase the accuracy, timeliness, and value of the project's information and, ultimately, to encourage more appropriate food security decision making.

FEWS NET will provide a package of practical field support and technical guidance to ensure that food economy analysis is gradually incorporated into project representatives' ongoing reporting and monitoring. It must be recognized up front that incorporating any new framework for analysis takes time and resources, particularly as FEWS NET is committed to the practice of including network partners in its assessment and analysis efforts. The strategy is to concentrate our efforts in the first seventeen months on establishing specific successes and then build on these successes over the next five years. Because baselines are re-usable for a range of different analyses, they are investments that pay off in the long run. Buy-ins will follow where we provide better information, and the demand for FEWS NET products will continue to increase as decision makers begin to see the policy usefulness of the new analysis.

The package will include a combination of new field work to build up baseline vulnerability information where possible (where buy-ins exist), training in analytical techniques to add value to the use of existing baseline information, and general guidance on food economy concepts to help FNRs make better use of existing secondary literature. F.E.G. members, experienced in training and vulnerability assessment, will be on call to provide field support to FNRs as necessary.

Two major activities will be undertaken during the first seventeen months of the project to ensure that FNRs are able to use food economy analysis in their work, provided that baseline information exists in their countries.

First, FEWS NET plans to undertake at least two pieces of fieldwork, one in Malawi and the other in a country still to be determined. Eritrea and Tanzania are possibilities. These baseline assessments will have at least two objectives:

1. To improve the quality of baseline information on hand for analyzing current and future ‘shocks’ and to provide insights into the nature of poverty in different areas of the country; and
2. To strengthen the capacity of FNRs and network partners to use food economy information in their ongoing analysis.

An added advantage to this approach is that experience has shown that when network partners participate in the field work, food economy assessments provide a unique and powerful platform for reaching new consensus on areas of old disagreement, thereby moving discussions forward on a more comprehensive set of food-security topics. Also, the food economy baseline products will themselves be useful as marketing tools for developing broader interest of USAID missions for buy-ins.

Second, FEWS NET plans to initiate three regional technical training workshops that will encompass the whole contingent of skills involved in the early warning to response planning continuum. The expectation is that all the relevant FEWS NET Team members would be involved in these training sessions, including USGS & Felix Lee (to cover remote sensing and ‘hazard’ information refresher courses). The reason for conducting these training sessions in all relevant areas at once is two-fold:

- It will reinforce the linkages between these critical areas, thereby encouraging the FNRs to take a more holistic approach to their analysis; and
- Time and money can be saved by doing one combined regional training rather than separate ones. The training process will be inclusive, working with in-country, regional, and international network partners.

In addition to the two major pieces of work outlined above (baseline VA work and the training sessions), FEWS NET, with the help of F.E.G. will carry out special studies as and where needed. It is especially relevant to consider the use of food economy analysis in drawing linkages between a number of sectors, including food security and health (esp. HIV/AIDS), education, and natural resource security. These linkages are made as a matter of course in food economy analysis where relevant but could be highlighted more effectively where USAID missions or other network partners required such information.

SECTION V

A More Comprehensive Approach to Reach More Decision Makers





In the past, FEWS has been generally successful in reaching a narrow set of decision makers, perhaps many more in Washington DC or in NGO and donor communities than within African governments. It was agreed during the strategic planning workshop that to reach a broader set of African decision makers, it had to be demonstrated that FEWS NET was producing more “market” driven information, capable of meeting the changing needs of a new generation of African decision makers. Through country and regional work plan processes, FEWS NET must develop a better understanding of those needs while demonstrating how more analytical information, such as food economy knowledge, can help inform a broader agenda of policy challenges that African policy makers face. For instance, a better understanding of the changing nature of household livelihoods can help policy makers identify practical and lower cost ways of enlarging income and productivity opportunities of the poor.

Decision making takes place outside of governments also. FEWS NET information through the Internet or through networks can be useful to the private sector, commercial producers, traders, and transporters of food products. Greater optimism and confidence is warranted in the ability of African farmers and commercial networks in maintaining a supply of food to rapidly growing urban markets, where, in light of recent policy reforms, improved urban/rural terms of trade should ensure a much larger rural production response. In the Sahel for instance, it is generally agreed that open markets and the private sector have been fundamental in increasing food availability as the region’s urban population increased one hundred fold in less than fifty years. The increased food supply response has meant reduced price volatility when poor rainfall reduces grain harvests.

FEWS NET work plans should seek to use information to progressively help decision makers make more informed decisions — for instance, food security policy, poverty reduction strategies, the lifting of trade barriers, and where to focus rural development projects. For this to happen, the work plan process must build on FEWS NET’s reputation for reliable and relevant information. The methods of information dissemination to policy makers will depend on the targeted audience. In addition to the constantly current FEWS NET website, we will continue to use joint missions, briefings and workshops to bring together governments with all other relevant actors in more policy oriented networks.

We will work with our partners to identify local needs for improving information access to municipalities and local communities. For instance, a UNDP supported program AFRICACITIES is working with African municipalities through the introduction of an analytical model for local economy studies so that mayors and city councils will have a better understanding of how their towns future depends on a healthy rural sector and the dynamics of urban/rural trade principally in food products. FEWS NET will work with UNDP and the African

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Association of Municipalities to make early warning and food economy information available for local planning through a growing municipal access to Internet and by participation in AFRICACITIES workshops and conferences.

The country strategies in each work plan for improving information dissemination to decision makers should identify local means to assess demand and plans and should include, through our network partners, ways to increase dissemination to newspapers, rural radio, and community bulletin boards. Rural radio in particular represents a critically important vehicle for information and will be an essential component to complement the FEWS NET reliance on internet dissemination.

The upcoming FEWS NET activity in Mozambique — to design a flood early warning system that will link remote sensing and regional early warning information with village preparedness and response planning in food threatened areas — will be an opportunity to develop an approach to radio-based local community response planning that could have useful application later in other countries, such as Madagascar.

SECTION VI

Information Dissemination

A. More Timely and Relevant Reports

Over time, FEWS NET Field Representatives (FNRs) build up a vast reservoir of food security knowledge about their countries and regions based on review of past documentation and analysis of current indicators, as well as personal observation, experience, and insights. Networking allows FNRs to enlarge their circle of contacts and sources of information. Moreover, thanks to the expansion of the Internet to nearly all FEWS NET countries, an almost limitless source of information is now just a few mouse-clicks away, including up-to-date and reliable information on food security crises in Africa.

One implementation challenge for FEWS NET is to take advantage of these multiple communications channels and make selective use of this information in a way that adds analytical value and decision-relevant knowledge for those who need to know, e.g. decision makers. In this manner, our information needs to become more relevant, timely, and accessible. It must also be decision-driven, drawing implications and recommending actions for preventing food crises or, should they occur, mitigating their impact.

The *Monthly Food Security Update* has now replaced the former FEWS Bulletin as the primary FEWS NET information product in terms of resources devoted to it and potential readership. The *Monthly Food Security Update* offers a regular opportunity to review the events of the past month and take stock. As a review of the month's events, it should be reasonably but selectively comprehensive. The primary targets of these Monthly Food Security Updates are those who advise decision makers and the general food security community. These Monthly Food Security Updates can be the means to generate interest and seek further detailed information by those who need to know.

However, we acknowledge that the Monthly Food Security Update is not necessarily a direct action tool. FEWS NET has many information products, each geared for different users.

- Some will be longer and more analytical, such as vulnerability assessments or special studies.
- Others will be warnings that are short, succinct, and more action-oriented, such as the current *Watches*, *Vulnerability Updates*, *Rain Watches*, and briefing materials for USAID/Embassy and visiting USG officials.
- Trip reports represent intermediate products that offer up-to-date demand-driven information on current issues.

We will weigh the desirability of disseminating each information product against the purpose it serves and the need to hold some information more confidentially.

B. Website Development and Monthly Food Security Updates

For the short term, the *Monthly Food Security Update* is the most visible star in the constellation of FEWS NET information products.

- It is the definitive FEWS NET product, the only one that appears regularly on the website.
- Its set of summaries is the only product that USAID asked us to distribute directly to readers by e-mail.

We have established procedures and a regular schedule for quickly reviewing and posting the country and regional *Monthly Food Security Updates* on the FEWS NET website based on a turn-around time of five working days from the date of receipt. E-mail summaries will be sent out about the same day.

As an information medium, our website offers many exciting possibilities for disseminating information other than *Monthly Food Security Updates*, too. FEWS NET will set up country centers — a “bulletin board” where our field representatives can post current and relevant information, not necessarily otherwise widely available or appropriate for *Monthly Food Security Updates*.

Our website has links with USAID and our cooperating USG agencies (NASA, NOAA, USDA/FAS, and USGS) as well as our sub-contractor, the Food Economy Group. The website has links with the major international and Africa weather centers. All past FEWS III publications and most guidelines are available on the website; other guidelines will be reviewed for their usefulness and conformity to FEWS NET’s overall vision.

The FEWS NET website is still new, a work in progress, but we expect it to be one of our most powerful ways of reaching users of our information. We will balance our use of the website with hard-copy distribution, and briefings, particularly in Africa where Internet access is sometimes limited.

C. Proposed Changes in Monthly Food Security Update: Content, Format, and Purpose

There are many sources of information, some quite good and up to date, about FEWS NET countries. We want to be sure that FEWS NET is distinguished from these other sources by the way in which our *Monthly Food Security Update* adds value to what is generally known, to offer more than “the news.” Thus, it is our vision that we must move the analytical content of our *Monthly Food Security Updates* further along the continuum of data → information → knowledge → understanding.

A good part of the FEWS III Monthly Food Security Updates format remains pertinent. That format was very oriented towards monitoring and reporting on key indicators — data and information. We want to build on this. However, past formats have been less oriented to the interpretation of these indicators in a systematic way. It raised the necessary question *So what?* without offering a framework for finding the answer.

The food economy analytical framework offers this structure by linking hazard information and indicators to a better understanding of vulnerability, so we know what these components mean in terms of food security outcomes. This type of analysis, included in Monthly Food Security Updates where possible, lends itself directly to preparing contingency plans and for responding to crises.

D. Country Monthly Food Security Updates

We are considering a new format for country Monthly Food Security Updates designed to achieve the proposed changes above. The new format acknowledges our traditional skills in remote sensing analysis, our strongest card in some circumstances. The new format builds on what FNRs contribute now, but sharpens the focus.

This format is based on:

1. A set of country highlights (or summary); and
2. A set of analytical conclusions based on current food security status and prospects for future food security status (where FNR choose the geographic focus and timeframe)

The most important parts — the highlights (summary) and main analytical conclusions about food security — are placed squarely up front. Even if people do not read beyond this point, they will have the essential news.

The format continues with:

3. A big-picture overview of national trends affecting all or most of the entire country, based on hazard and non-hazard information
4. A look at one or two trouble spots to help meet the information needs of those responsible for planning a response that would:
 - present monthly/seasonal calendars and describe livelihood activities, sources of income, expenditure patterns and sources of food in a “normal year” and describe what should be happening this month
 - point out any unusual or unseasonal hazard information
 - describe the impact of these hazard indicators on household food security
 - point out the key indicators to watch
 - describe possible outcome scenarios if those indicators reach certain critical levels
 - consider actions to be taken now to avert these outcome scenarios
5. One or two additional topics or special features selected by the FNR in order to allow our field representatives, those with their ear to the ground, to help drive the content of their *Monthly Food Security Updates*

It is equally important that our *Monthly Food Security Updates* point out areas where food security conditions have become more favorable, the “good news.”

The revised format above will be phased in, as FNRs feel increasingly comfortable with their ability to monitor, assess, and report on conditions in trouble spots. Other FNRs may continue to use their present formats based on a look at food availability, food access, and other topics of interest.

As before, our *Monthly Food Security Updates* must be accurate, articulate, and logically clear. They must be written with enough length and with sufficient explanation to be convincing. And they must be short enough to read and remember. Thus, they will need to strike an important balance between the right amount of detail and brevity. Two other points bear mentioning:

- First, the FEWS NET headquarters team will closely review the country *Monthly Food Security Updates* to ensure that there are quality standards of writing and logical argument, as well a grasp of technical issues and their implications. This quality control will extend also to maps, graphs, and other illustrations.
- Second, high-quality *Monthly Food Security Updates* will not be possible without periodic tooling and retooling of our field staff to maintain their multiple skills. As noted earlier, we propose to hold three regional hands-on training workshops during the period of Task Order #1. These training workshops will cover topics ranging from analysis of satellite imagery, analysis of markets and prices, use of the food economy framework of analysis, the role of FNRs in contingency planning and crisis response, and elements of good writing.

E. Regional Monthly Food Security Updates

We are developing a format for the new addition of regional reporting that looks at broad, cross-cutting regional themes and issues that would otherwise be overlooked by country reporting.

We expect these regional *Monthly Food Security Updates* to cover near-term and longer-term food security information — particularly availability and access — from a regional perspective. The regional *Monthly Food Security Updates* will not be simply a compilation of country *Monthly Food Security Updates* from the region. As such, these regional *Monthly Food Security Updates* should be useful for informing regional and national decision makers, especially within the USG, about contingency planning and responses. Even though our regional field representatives will focus on FEWS NET countries in their respective regions, they will follow and take into account developments in neighboring countries that have a bearing on FEWS NET countries: for instance, the rest of SADC in the case of Southern Africa; Djibouti, Rwanda, and northern Sudan in the case of the Greater Horn; and Senegal as well as coastal West Africa in the case of the Sahel. Regional reports will also look at food trade and labor mobility linkages as applicable.

The nature of our regional Monthly Food Security Updates will vary according to the outlook and capabilities of the African regional organizations with which we will network. Above all, we are prepared to accept a great deal of flexibility in the format and content of these regional Monthly Food Security Updates, consistent with the professional judgement of our regional representatives. Some regional reports might not be monthly at all but cover special topics of immediate concern to decision makers.

F. Country Dissemination, Networks and Reaching Decision Makers, Exploring Some Alternatives, Different Product for Different Users

Given the critical nature of FEWS NET work, it is essential that country and regional FEWS NET Representatives have sufficient autonomy — always tempered by accountability — to carry out their work in country situations and institutions that differ widely. Thus, our field representatives largely maintain editorial control over their Monthly Food Security Updates and other information products, as well as the means of getting the information out. This is especially the case where field representatives are part of a network that jointly publishes a local monthly report or bulletin. We, FEWS NET, will need to accept a certain diversity of viewpoints and methods that comes with our participation in broad-based networks — provided that we do not compromise integrity as early warning food security analysts.

Over the five-year course of FEWS NET, we will test our ability to deliver demand-driven food security information in at least two ways:

- First, we will seek to identify a core number of influential decision makers or advisors of decision makers in each country and region to effectively direct our information to them. Knowing who these individual decision makers are also allows us to ascertain their information needs more precisely.
- Second, we will be able to identify users of our website by registering the number of hits we receive by each type of information sought as well as geographic and institutional type of user. This knowledge will help direct us to strengthen that particular location on the website in greatest demand.

We will invite reader and user feedback through our website or direct e-mail to info@fews.net.

SECTION VII

Networking and Consensus Building

At the Nairobi transition workshop (June 2000), discussions began on how to use FEWS NET as a catalyst for building networks that facilitate consensus on the nature of country food security problems and on most appropriate responses. These discussions continued with FNRs in Washington in August during the strategic planning workshop. It was clear that there were a wide variety of “networking” constraints and opportunities in each FEWS NET country and region. Selecting which network to work with and how, are important early decisions that should be reflected in each individual work plan.

In the past, “networking” has always been a part of FEWS. Then, as now, networks were considered as a means for information sharing and joint validation of recommended actions. With FEWS NET, however, more is being asked than simple networking. The building of networks is also meant to lead to consensus between government and non-governmental parties on food security assessments and coordinated responses. They should, perhaps, be built around government institutions, or alternatively enabled to provide capacity enhancing support to weakened government early warning and response systems. In this regard, several different kinds of networks and country situations were identified during the strategy planning workshop discussions:

- Networks that are little more than donor/NGO working groups with limited local ownership through local civil society organizations
- Formal food security entities, mostly involving government agriculture ministries under the direction of a government office or a regional inter-governmental organization (SADC-FANR regional early warning unit, CILSS/AGRYMET, and National Committees).
- Country-level networks that come together periodically by a convergence of interests during periods of crisis that stimulate temporary, but not necessarily longer term, network for coordination (e.g. the recent collaboration between Ethiopia’s Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Commission, donors, and NGOs).
- Country situations where there are not yet consensus-serving networks and where government exhibits sensitivities to some aspects of building networks for information sharing and policy influencing purposes (Eritrea, Sudan, Zimbabwe)
- A variant in which the “network” is actually a series of special interest networks, each working in different but related food security domains and with separate (if overlapping) memberships.

In the development of each country work plan, FEWS NET field representatives have been asked to begin a preliminary survey of networks to develop incentives that strengthen networks while basing their proposals in the realities of each country. Each work plan should consider what progress could reasonably be achieved in the next eighteen months in creating and or strengthening networks. They should also try to provide a basis for an objective measurement of progress in network strengthening. To do that, they will have to survey a number of characteristics:

- Institutional features, diversity of membership source of mandate, linkage to government, process for decision making, methods for managing lack of member consensus.
- Principal network outputs, geographic or thematic focus, access to decision makers
- Degree of participation by members, outputs of quality products, and problems encountered.
- Human resources, funding, and logistics capabilities

In addition, it was suggested at the Nairobi transition workshop that some of the characteristics for effectiveness in famine prevention networks are:

- African owned, with an identity separate from donor-driven groups
- Partly governmental, partly non-governmental
- Demand driven, with information users defining needs for future products
- Able to foster dialogue between food consumers and suppliers
- Able to involve media and encourage broader dissemination of information
- Transparent and able to connect people at all levels
- Able to empower the participation of civil society and local stakeholders in food security in formation systems and response choices

In summary, the overall implementation plan for network surveying and development can be aggregated only from the conclusions of country and regional work plans. With few if any financial incentives available to encourage effective networking, the encouragement has to come from the clear benefit of finding common value in confronting hard facts about food security and famine threats in the country or region concerned. Following the initial network survey and work plan reviews, we will propose where additional attention should be given to more in depth network assessment or where specific additional actions by FEWS NET are warranted to catalyze networks with promise.

SECTION VIII

Capacity Strengthening

In the past, FEWS has certainly contributed to technical capacity strengthening primarily through training of FEWS field staff, but also in the training of professional level technicians from FEWS presence countries, NGOs, and regional organizations. This technical training has covered most of the basic tools used in the early warning response planning, including GIS data manipulation, computer software application, and rapid appraisal techniques. However, two problems have in the past limited FEWS' contributions to country capacity building:

- First, a large number of the technicians previously trained by FEWS have left the posts for which they received training, partly due to low salaries and pay irregularities, but also because opportunities arose outside of government, given their strong technical skills. This creates a continuing need for the training of new staff.
- Second, the information per se, whether from national sources or FEWS, has not been adequate to the task of strengthening decision-making capacities of policy level personnel.

Some of the actions of FEWS NET intended to address these limitations have been identified in earlier sections of this strategic framework. It should be noted, however, that the capacity strengthening and institution building elements of FEWS NET are perhaps the project's most challenging objectives. With public sector budgets in most FEWS NET countries severely constrained, following years of economic adjustment and low growth, an erosion of capacity has occurred throughout their civil services. It is probably not realistic to think about measuring progress in capacity strengthening in terms of increased budgeting outlay from FEWS NET countries for offices devoted to early warning, disaster response, or contingency planning. Several reasons can be suggested:

- First, all FEWS NET countries are planning more comprehensive poverty reduction strategies (PRSPs), and they are assuming, rightly or wrongly, that progress in poverty reduction will reduce the priority of public spending for offices that deal with emergencies.
- Second, some African nations are learning that it is okay for technical capacities to exist outside of government because there are efficient ways to work with independent institutes, universities and local private sectors in ways that provide additional technical and analytical information for governments. It is likely that this trend will continue with World Bank/IMF pressure on countries to reduce civil service size.

- Third, as noted earlier, some FEWS NET countries have increasing confidence in the technical capacities of their regional organizations and see efficiencies in sharing the costs of strengthening regional institutions given what they cannot afford at home.

Capacity Strengthening and Networks

It was generally agreed during the workshop that FEWS NET had to be more comprehensive and creative in determining where and how networks can act to enhance country capacity. To the extent there are network processes that lead to consensus and transparency in analysis and estimates, some key steps are already being taken to demonstrate that reliable and locally available capacities exist for decision makers. Any work activity of FEWS NET and networking partners should be seen as an opportunity for capacity strengthening. FEWS NET information itself, whether through the Internet or rural radio, can be employed by users to expand capacities at all levels — from villages to capitals. When networks are enabled with information to arrive at consensus contingency plans, then capacities for coordination have been strengthened, and arguably, the ability to disseminate information to decision makers also strengthened through the consensus.

Networks will also serve as instruments for mobilizing better-coordinated resources for capacity building. In the past, some African governments have avoided assuming the recurrent costs of donor-funded early warning projects that were ending, because they assumed that there would be some other external donor willing to assist when the next crisis seemed in the offing. With improved multi-donor coordination through networks, this kind of thinking might hopefully give way to a serious dialogue with partners concerning country capacity and institutional weaknesses with planned options to reinforce early warning and response planning.

As part of work plan implementation, each FNR will be requested to analyze the key food security institutions in the region and country, to look at the flows and quality of information from those institutions, and if, how, and what kind of information is reaching decision makers. By looking at the institutional centers of analysis and decision making through the optics of information flows, FEWS NET field representatives should be able to identify the institutional or informational weak links, which should then become focal points for network efforts to reinforce capacity.

In summary, it is the intention of FEWS NET to work to strengthen the roles of networks and regional institutes involved in early warning as means to fill capacity gaps and move individual governments toward better response preparedness. To the extent governments are “surrounded” by transparent and consensus information, they are less likely to generate fictitious food needs and more likely to listen to consensus responses being recommended by regional institutions and country networks.

SECTION IX

More Value Added Linkages to USAID Country and Regional Strategies

During the strategic planning workshop, the strategy frameworks of all USAID country programs and regions were given a preliminary review to see where and how FEWS NET information could provide valuable input for specific areas of USAID priority and bring more synergy in the use of resources. In some cases, it was noted that country strategies made little or no reference to agriculture or food security. The revised REDSO/EA strategy on the other hand, places food security, famine prevention, and conflict mitigation as centerpieces — goals FEWS NET can contribute to in a number of informational ways. In USAID-presence countries that have chosen to emphasize other pressing priorities such as HIV/AIDS, child survival, private sector and trade development, primary and girls education, FEWS NET can add to databases with expertise and food economy information to assist USAID project plans and their implementation.





It was concluded that these linkages had to be developed in the field, country by country, and region by region. This would be done progressively by briefings with USAID and other network partners in the process of drafting the individual FEWS NET work plans. There needs to be a better understanding and articulation of the potential use of FEWS NET information capability by the FNRs and a better understanding of USAID's needs. This has to be a progressive building of information transfer relationships that would have two elements:

- Those analytical and data based information that could be extrapolated and put into useful form through the normal work of FEWS NET country and regional representatives.
- Other information that will require special studies or systems and capacity development that will require additional funding from regional or country buy-ins.

During the workshop, we identified a number of specific actions that would be useful to further develop with USAID missions to facilitate the identification of how FEWS NET expertise and data could provide value added to other USAID priorities. These include:

- Invitation to FEWS NET field representatives to participate as team members in some of the USAID strategic objectives teams
- Joint briefings and activities that will help strengthen networks, their consensus producing processes, and access to decision makers
- Inclusion of FEWS NET representatives in multi-donor coordination committees and sectoral working groups to engage other donors more in supporting institution building and policy environment questions that are beyond FEWS NET resources.

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- In addition to full involvement in FEWS NET country work plan reviews, USAIDs could be requested to organize in-country workshops where FEWS NET teams could outline the value added linkages between FEWS NET information products and other strategic objectives of the mission.

In considering the range of potential areas of related interest to USAIDs, several priorities emerged from the discussions and reviews of individual USAID's strategic objective frameworks. The most important opportunities identified were:

Urban poverty and food access. With growing numbers of urban poor, the challenge for both policies and food production sectors is to ensure an adequate supply response when urban purchasing power is low and sharp price increases a constant threat. A better understanding of food access and urban/rural dynamics can help African governments and USAID with information designed to help with urban growth policies and response planning by municipalities and elected local authorities.

Health and HIV/AIDS. The food economy analytical tools can help translate health and AIDS consequences into economic issues, such as impact on farm labor requirements, the loss of which effects livelihoods across the board, as well as school enrollment and planned family size.

Poverty reduction. As most African countries begin to prepare and implement national poverty reduction strategies (PRSPs), FEG vulnerability baselines and time series and basic data sets of FEWS NET can help in the very important process of identifying where the poor are, why are they poor, what are the constraints that keep them poor, and how can these be relieved. In addition, the PRSPs are expected to provide a framework for countries to agree with all international partners on the key poverty reduction indicators that are to be monitored with quality data and analyses. This is a perfect example of where FEWS NET information can provide data for broader development planning purpose or to evaluate the potential impacts of various policy or program options.

Conflict Early Warning. Many of Africa's famines and most acute food insecurity have grown out of conflict. Conversely, many of the conflicts, especially smaller ones that could grow into larger internal wars, are rooted in issues of access to adequate land and pasture resources and the breakdown of traditional grazing and land rights systems. FEWS NET information can help those involved in conflict early warning and mitigation better understand the root causes of conflict that are more often related to locally perceived livelihood threats.

Climate change and desertification. While these relationships are still being understood, many scientists have been looking at time series data that suggests that the Sahel and Horn of Africa could become more arid in coming years as a result of climate change. Conversely, Southern Africa could become considerably wetter, requiring adaptations in early warning systems, agricultural research strategies, and public investment priorities. FEWS NET and USGS information, particularly time series data on changing land vegetative holding capacities, soil fertility, loss of tree species, and changing demographic and livelihood patterns could become very important for decision makers who are all too often dealing with short-term issues.

While there was substantial enthusiasm for finding the networking avenues to make greater contributions to other USAID and country development objectives, there were also a few concerns:

- One is that FEWS NET must have new insights to share, while producing high-quality information. Doing our basics well becomes a prerequisite for any contributions to a higher set of objectives.
- There was also concern about “rigidity” in networks, where other potential collaborators become in fact competitors for scarce funding.
- Some expressed concern that too many expectations were being placed on FEWS NET relative to the means at our disposal.

While these were all considered legitimate concerns, it was concluded that there was nothing standing in the way of developing specific proposals with USAID and other partners to enlarge resources. In the meantime, through our regular analysis and reporting, we can demonstrate what could be done in ways that will both attract additional resources and encourage processes of consensus building.

SECTION X

FEWS NET Information and Longer Term Food Security Phenomena





In the past, FEWS has monitored mainly short-term phenomena from drought, to cyclones to price fluctuations and locust outbreaks. However, it is now certain that people also become increasingly food insecure because of other long-term phenomena such as climate change, desertification, and loss of soil fertility. Because FEWS along with USGS and NOAA now has an extensive stock of time series data, it is now possible to begin to bring together information from ongoing FEWS NET monitoring, time series data, and new remote sensing technologies to measure natural resource changes over time. We are now able to bring together biophysical factors, land cover capacity and carbon sequestration in soils, with more knowledge of human activity. By using NDVI remote sensing data and FEWS field methods together with food economy methods, longer term warning can become a more precise art.

It is proposed that FEWS NET begin to monitor these longer term issues through the reinforcement of country and regional networks and by working with those offices responsible for preparing the National Action Programs (NAPs) that are called for under the U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The NAPs are to be country-led and prepared through “bottom-up” participatory processes, with locally determined monitoring and evaluation of indicators a high priority. FEWS NET information and expertise can assist those offices responsible for implementation of the UNCCD National Action Plans in the development of monitoring and planning databases and with capacity strengthening in the use of FEWS NET/USGS time series.

Implementation of the longer term monitoring is proposed to begin on several levels:

- First, within limitations of funding and time, FNRs will begin to integrate ideas on desertification and climate change monitoring into their normal activities, to make new information on longer term vulnerability threats available to country decision makers and network partners.
- Second, regional FEWS NET representatives will similarly integrate information on longer term environmental change into their reporting and work plans, but in ways that support ownership and capacity reinforcement in African regional organizations, CILSS, SADC, IGAD. These three bodies have been requested by their members to prepare regional action programs to complement national action. These IGOs are specifically charged with providing information of a longer term, spatial nature to their member governments. Additional funding will be required for some special studies, bringing regional information together and presenting FEWS NET capabilities with regionally organized workshops. These requirements should be reflected in regional FEWS NET work plans. In the Sahel, we will coordinate closely

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with CILSS and the West Africa Regional Program (WARP) regarding the separate project on long term vegetation cover changes they have started with CILSS/AGRYMET and USGS, to determine what information might be shared with decision makers.

- Third, the FEWS NET Project Manager will plan to visit the Secretariat of the UNCCD, to review with Mr. Arba Diallo (the Executive Secretary and from Burkina Faso) the potential FEWS NET contributions. This could respond to the Secretariat's strong interest in sensitizing decision makers everywhere with scientific information that demonstrates the full developmental consequences of loss of vegetative cover. It is important to make sure that in applying early warning information to desertification monitoring and livelihood changes, FEWS NET's intended contributions are well coordinated at both country and regional levels in Africa but also with the UNCCD Secretariat, other donors and the Scientific Committee of the Conference of Parties to the U. N. Convention.

In addition, as noted earlier we propose to develop cooperative working relationships with selected universities and research institutions in the Netherlands, U.K., and Nordic countries, who are conducting independent research on climate change, desertification, and how, through changing coping strategies, people manage food security and vulnerability. As part of this cooperation, we propose to begin publishing summaries of important research findings that give FEWS NET countries new access to these longer term research findings that complement FEWS NET information and help formulate environmental and agriculture development policy options.

ANNEX A

Annual Work Plan

I. Overview

Opportunities and challenges

II. Activity Descriptions

Outcome 1: Timely and accurate dissemination of early warning information

Strategic discussion

Outputs or intermediate results

Outcome 2: Improved vulnerability analysis

Strategic discussion

Outputs or intermediate results

Outcome 3: Improved decision making and response planning

Strategic discussion

Outputs or intermediate results

Outcome 4: Efficient and effective project administration and management

Strategic discussion

Outputs or intermediate results

Outcome 5: Strengthened networks

Strategic discussion

Outputs or intermediate results

Outcome 6: Strengthened capacity

Strategic discussion

Outputs or intermediate results

III. Budget Requirements

Core budget (18 months)

Additional requirements tied to specific results anticipated so added value from additional resource mobilization can be justified.

ANNEX B





Annual Work Plan Template (Budget Section)

Annual Work Plan (October 1, 2000 to December 31, 2001)

Country : _____
Version:
Date:

Activities	Resources Required	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Mar	Apr
I. Program Costs Timely and accurate dissemination of early warning information Activity/task 1 Activity/task 2 Activity/task 3 Etc Output(s): Improved vulnerability analysis Activity/task 1 Activity/task 2 Activity/task 3 Etc Output(s): Improved decision-making and response planning Activity/task 1 Activity/task 2 Activity/task 3 Etc Outputs: Efficient and effective project administration and management Activity/task 1 Activity/task 2 Activity/task 3 Etc Output(s): Strengthened Networks Activity/task 1 Activity/task 2 Activity/task 3 Etc							

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Annual Work Plan (October 1, 2000 to December 31, 2001)**Country :** _____**Version:****Date:**

Activities	Resources Required	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Mar	Apr
Output(s):							
Strengthened Capacity							
Activity/task 1							
Activity/task 2							
Activity/task 3							
Etc							
Output(s):							
II Core Recurrent Costs							
Office expenses, vehicles, field visits etc.							
HO Resources Needed							
Phil Steffen							
Tanya Boudreau							
Roy Stacy							
Felix Lee							
Stephen Walls							
Project Management Unit							
Other: consultant needs							

*** Please mark an "X" in the appropriate month column when activity is ongoing or output is completed.

Menu of Intermediate Results Indicators

Outcome 1: Dissemination of early warning information

- Evidence of more complete and analytical monthly reports and their public availability through the FEWS NET web site and hard copy distribution in individual countries
- A world class FEWS NET web site with timely posting of full monthly reports of high quality and relevance
- Evidence of policy use of other FEWS NET products, –briefing materials, special reports, and “watches”

Outcome 2: Improved vulnerability analysis

- Increased use of Food Economy analysis in the ongoing early warning and response planning of FEWS NET representatives and partner governments and regional organizations
- Completion of three regional training workshops in food economy analysis techniques

Outcome 3: Improved decision making and response planning

- Evidence of consensus response plans prepared and adopted by governments in FEWS NET countries, including local and municipal response preparedness
- Increased use by key decision-makers of FEWS NET information, evidence of decision-maker use of FEWS NET web site, as measured by information downloading frequency

Outcome 4: Efficient project administration

- A reduction in the time FNRs have to spend on administrative issues so that increased time is devoted to strategic management of work plans
- Evidence of improved coordination with other partners and more efficient use of resources to support food security and early warning priorities through joint action in vulnerability analyses.

Outcome 5: Strengthened networks

- The number of joint assessments and consensus analyses prepared with networks
- The numbers of new networks established, including informal, to work on food security issues, particularly response planning
- The building of new relationships with existing networks, including private sector and regional networks

Outcome 6: Strengthened capacity

- Numbers of training activities undertaken
- Evidence that the institutional degradation of national early warning offices has been halted through improving budget support or that regional institutions can provide these functions with growing efficiency and economies of scale
- Evidence of FEWS NET contribution to country plans and policies for poverty reduction, agriculture and rural development, natural resource management and national desertification actions plans (NAPS)

Indicative activities by Outcome

Outcome 1: Timely and Accurate Dissemination of Early Warning Information

- Assess current information availability, content, flows, and analysis.
- Assess demand for early warning products and food security studies by different client groups.
- Monitor, analyze, and report on current food security conditions and expected trends.
- Ensure network partner decision-makers at all levels have access to regular information and analysis.
- Plan and undertake special studies related to early warning.
- Build and maintain databases.

Outcome 2: Improved Vulnerability Analysis

- Assess demand for, supply of and gaps in existing vulnerability information.
- Participate in training on VA
- Familiarize partners with FEWS NET VA approach and mobilize resources for vulnerability baseline work.
- Use baseline analysis to inform decisions (relief, policy, program, etc.) where and when possible.
- Provide VA reports and briefings as necessary.
- Initiate and support demand driven special studies.

Outcome 3: Improved Decision-Making and Response Planning

- Assess decision-making (including response/contingency planning) processes in country amongst network partners.
- Identify opportunities for improving use of FEWS NET information by decision-makers.
- Contribute to/catalyze contingency and response planning with FEWS NET information.
- Mobilize FEWS NET resources and support implementation of capacity strengthening activities.

Outcome 4: Efficient and Effective Project Administration and Management

- Preparation and coordination of field review of Interim and Annual Work Plans, and Annual Country Performance Report.
- Contributions to project-level Strategic Plan and Annual Report.
- Development and maintenance of appropriate office administration systems.
- Supervision of national FEWS NET office personnel.
- Help in preparation of monthly financial reports.

Outcome 5: Strengthened Networks

- Assess existing country food security network(s) and partners (including government, private sector, international agencies, NGOs, media and other(s) and strategically prioritize those partners and networks in which to collaborate.
- Identify opportunities for FEWS NET to contribute to creating new networks and/or strengthening existing network(s).
- Define a vision for collaboration with new and existing networks, including FEWS NET contribution to each network.
- Participate in network decision-making activities (attend meetings, provide FEWS NET inputs, serve as an officer of the network, participate in joint efforts of network members, etc.).
- Initiate and support special network-led studies.

Outcome 6: Strengthened Capacity

- Assess strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of food security network actors.
- Develop capacity strengthening initiatives to support early warning, vulnerability assessment, and decision-making efforts.
- Mobilize FEWS NET resources and support implementation of capacity strengthening activity